

FC 3061.7  
y6

*With compliments of S. L. C.*

FROM THE WEEK, Oct. 12, 1894.]

THE YORK PIONEERS' LOG CABIN.  
1794—1894.

The following lines were read at the meeting of the Society of York Pioneers, held at the Log Cabin in the grounds of the Industrial Exhibition, Toronto, on Thursday, Sept. 7th, 1894, and are printed by request.

Dedicated to the Society of York Pioneers.  
From fair Devon's lovely vales and chimes  
He came who built this cabin rude and plain.  
Simcoe, his early friend, had called him here  
To view the land, and choose himself a home ;  
Him knowing full of worth, a man to help  
In building up the State on stones secure—  
Truth, Justice, Loyalty, Far-reaching aim—  
Thus 'twas John Scadding saw Ontario's shore  
And this fair Province. On the banks of  
Don,

Where the slow river widens to the Lake,  
He stood a century ago, and scanned  
With eager, anxious eye, the virgin scene.  
Entranced he gazed, his very soul astound  
At Nature's beauty and magnificence.  
Before him, southward, stretched a mighty  
lake,  
On strong tides rolling to horizons far,  
In whose deep, sheltering bays, for Peace or  
War,

The fleets of nations might securely ride :  
And food and sustenance for million souls  
Be found within its depths,—Riches untold.  
Above, the blue sky like a sapphire gleamed,  
And where the slow-winged heron trailed, or  
rose

The circling gull, or phantom-noted loon,  
The brilliant atmosphere made silhouettes,  
So clear and pure its texture. On the land  
Vast forests crowned the heights that north-  
ward lay,

Where towering elms, like sentinels, o'er-  
topped  
Great oaks, and darkling pines shot up like  
spires.

Wide beeches grey, and maples full of sap,  
Clothed all the swelling hills; and in the vales  
That downward drew to meet the flowing  
stream,

Willows luxuriant and green alders threw  
A grateful shadow, where bright rills and  
brooks

Went singing 'mid their reeds, with fern and  
flower.

And where the stream, grown languorous, fell  
to pools,

The wild duck had her nest, and clouds of  
birds

Shook the wild rice that rose in gracefu  
plumes

Among the marshes, where the bittern boomed.

And all the forest land, vocal with song,

Teemed with wild life, the settler's hope and  
fear.

O! how the fine and fragrant air he breathed  
Glowed in the young man's blood and thrilled  
his nerves,

And set him dreaming!—as a youth should  
dream—

Of a fond home, and woman's love and care  
To bless and crown with lengthened happi-  
ness

A pious life of patient duty done;

Of sons and daughters, strong and beautiful,

In whom his name should live, and honoured  
be;

Of a calm evening hour, when life's sun draws  
Towards setting, and the labourer looks to lay  
His tools aside and softly muse of Heaven.

*Ha! did ye hear the demon's mocking laugh  
Flash through the high-topped trees!*

And then his thoughts ranged wider than  
himself:

His vision saw, with Simcoe, the deep woods

Recede before a people high of heart,

Of large emprise, and worthy purpose fixed.

He saw the House of God in honour placed,

Order and Law installed, and Learning set

In high estate, the land thus building up

To a large future, by the Grace of God.

And now with resolution on his brow

He marks his own.

And soon the merry axe

Sets all the vales a-ringing; laugh and shout

And human cheer and song fond Echo wake;

The pioneers of York come hastening in—

For all were brothers then—and each man  
 bares  
 A willing arm to help his neighbour.  
 Strong men and true bring down the umbrageous oak,  
 Square the tall pine, and lower the towering elm;  
 And some the broad axe wield, and some the saw  
 Two-handed; others the heavy ox—  
 Patient of load and foddered easily—  
 Put to the chains and draw the logs in place;  
 And some the mortar mix of river clay,  
 Others the stones draw from the shelving bank,  
 Some gather moss for chinking, some the bark  
 To shingle the new roof. Thus rises soon,  
 With hospitable hearth and chimney wide,  
 A pioneer's log cabin snug and warm.  
 O hearts were merry on the auspicious day  
 John Scadding stood within his open door  
 And welcomed all.

And still the door swings wide.  
 For here are we, a group of Pioneers  
 (Myself by grace), and still a Scadding stands  
 And welcomes all, for this log cabin 'twas  
 His father built a century ago.  
 And all those dreams wherewith the young  
 man pleased  
 A buoyant, happy fancy, are come true.  
 Where but the Red Man roamed a city stands:  
 Where only Nature witnessed to a God,  
 His temples rise, His servants worship Him,  
 Man serving man, and looking all to Heaven.  
 Order and Law and Learning have high place,  
 As witness these surroundings, where man's  
 brain,  
 And energy, and muscle, schooled by Rule,  
 Show large results.

And that fond dream of Home  
 And sweet domestic bliss, and honoured name,  
 And service done the State, came also true.  
 (*Despite the mocking demon of the trees*)\*  
 For there is none Toronto boasts to-day  
 Of men have served her in all worthiness  
 Stands higher in her best esteem than he,  
 John Scadding's son, President venerate,

\* Rev. Dr. Scadding's father, Mr. John Scadding, was killed in middle age by the fall of a tree on his own estate. His tomb is in St. James' cemetery, and a Latin inscription to his memory graces the stone.

Our first, because our chief, York Pioneer.  
O happy dream, to come so richly true !

Three generations knew this tiny home,  
York's sweet domestic life of love and toil  
(Though 'twas not his that reared it) †  
And then, a summer day saw a strange sight !  
A band of Pioneers—a jovial crowd—  
Pulled down the cot their fathers helped to

build,  
Piled up the logs on trucks, put-to the teams  
Of ancient oxen, mounted the loads them-

selves,  
And waving Britain's flag in loyal glee,  
Set out with shout and merriment along  
The western way, *and brought the cabin here.*  
*Then set it up again, with many a joke,*  
And many a reminiscence glad and sad.

And here long may it stand, a memory  
Of brave old times, a spur to new. .

S. A. C.

† Mr. John Scadding occupied the cabin only as a bachelor, and sold it to Mr. John Smith, a builder and an early York Pioneer, erecting a house on another part of his land near by, when he married.